

NCA Higher Learning Commission Accreditation Preparation Committee
Minutes
February 14, 2003 (Second Meeting)

Present: Margaret Genisio, Tom Manning, Peggy Davidson, Nick Dvoracek, Craig Fiedler, Susan Finkel, Dale Feinauer, Jaya Jambunathan, John Koker, Quintin Sullivan.

The meeting was called to order at 10:35a. Committee members introduced themselves.

Minutes from last meeting were discussed and unanimously approved.

The agenda prepared for today consists of talking points for committee discussion. Margaret and Tom deleted a couple of items because they did not have enough information to present.

Agenda Item #1: Set up committee meeting schedule for rest of year:

Committee members discussed how often they should to meet. Margaret and Tom will be doing some prep work to present to the committee. Members decided to meet again next month, and will decide at each meeting when to meet next. Tom feels we need two meetings, in March and April (to report on NCA annual meeting). Meeting dates were set for March 28th, 10:30, 1.5 hrs, and April 18th, 10:30, 1.5 hrs. Holly will schedule rooms for the meetings.

❖ Motion to approve: Davidson; Second: Jambunathan.

Tom and Margaret will attend a day-long workshop at the April NCA meeting, designed for schools preparing for accreditation. They will brief the committee at the April meeting. Several other committee members are attending the general session. Committee members can attend for a single day.

Agenda Item #2: Determine key committee tasks for the next 12 months:

Margaret and Tom do not have enough information at this time; they will work with Peggy Davidson and Craig Fiedler to draft discussion points for the next meeting.

Agenda Items #3-4: Discussion recommendations from the 1997 NCA Steering Committee and Discuss operational structure—how many subcommittees across campus will be formed—what is the role/responsibility of the sub-committees?

The committee has not seen all of the documentation containing recommendations from the last evaluation. The committee chairs will distribute information to the members prior to the next meeting.

Materials for the next evaluation need to be filed centrally. As a member of the previous accreditation team, Craig Fielder was asked if the steering committee should be eliminated and three campus groups created to deal with entire process: core, review, and writing teams. The steering committee from the last evaluation consisted mainly of administrators. There were self-study committees for each of the 5 accreditation standards. Each self-study committee had 10-12 members and chair and worked for a 16-18 month period gathering materials, reviewing/analyzing data, and drafting the report for their area. There were many problems with self-study committees writing their own reports – there were too many variations. It would have been easier if one writing team had written the entire report.

Committee members feel that the Office of Institutional Research should be the primary data collector. A review team could provide feedback on suggestions from sub-committees. The entire process needs to be more efficient in order to make better use of people's time and create a tighter process.

What should the role of this committee be? Should this committee serve as the review committee? This committee may need broader base campus input; it does not have enough representatives from across campus. Question: can this group integrate information from sub-groups? It was suggested that the committee wait until Tom and Margaret return from the NCA meeting before proceeding future with committee structure.

Discussion followed regarding the charge of the current committee. The committee should prepare a draft of the process and skeleton plan for gathering information and process. We are premature on the process for 2007; however, we are behind in terms of follow-up from 1997 report. The committee needs to look at the previous report -- that would drive what

data we need to collect. Have we done what we said we were going to do? Data is being collected by the assessment committee, but the reporting and changes are not happening; implementation and engagement of results of last review.

Departments are objecting to assessment because they don't see it working. Jennifer Mihalick, chair of the Assessment Committee, will be highlighting reports from successful departments, is developing a web site and will be visiting areas to present successful plans. The Assessment committee currently uses the following website:

http://www.uwosh.edu/faculty_staff/mihalick/assessment.html

Agenda Item #5: Discuss how to foster campus-wide communication on the NCA self-study process:

A website is the best place to start presenting information. It would be easier than having resource room. Nick could put website together once we have more information.

The committee needs to look at the recommendations from the previous evaluation – how did we say we would handle communication? During the last evaluation, the committee circulated newsletters and had informational meetings to keep people aware of process. Newsletters started 18-months prior to review. Through 5 sub-committees, approximately 60-70 people were represented across campus. Newsletters were helpful in recognizing people and providing tangible documentation for the site visit, showing broad based communication across campus. Personal connection is helpful. It was suggested that the committee could meet with college councils and have them take information back to the departments.

The Social Work Accrediting model proposes special projects that add substantively to what we do. Can we use this information in the self-study process? This would be what NCA refers to as an AQIP model — you pick a specialized target, negotiate with NCA, proceed with work on the target as a replacement to the accreditation process. AQIP is used to maintain accreditation.

Dale Feinauer stated that the key elements in a strategic plan become standards on which we evaluate rather than NCA standards. The University has already done a strategic plan that measures up with NCA guidelines. We have infrastructure – we are ahead of process with our strategic planning and operational process.

The first job of the current committee is to be proactive and structure this process to our campus' benefit. Should this committee draft document this for discussion with NCA stating why we think our strategic planning standards mesh with NCA accreditation standards? We need to be cautious because in 1997 NCA was not flexible with the process.

Tom and Margaret will draft a document (1 page memo) for next meeting.

Agenda Items #6-7: were not discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Holly Lawryk, Recorder